



NCARNG Weekly Safety Newsletter



January 23, 2015

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Guiding a vehicle from one place to the next is a particularly challenging task in winter weather. Winter driving presents a number of challenges to both you and your car. Cold weather tests the limits of your car's mechanical abilities. Treacherous driving conditions test your abilities as a driver.

Follow these tips when the temperatures drop and the roads are icy:

- **Clear all snow** from your car's windows, lights, license plates, and roof. Snow blowing from the roof of your car is a visibility hazard to the driver behind you.
- **Back off.** Have patience and give people more lead-time, especially if there's snow on the road. You'll thank yourself when the car ahead suddenly spins out.
- **Give yourself a brake.** If you go into a skid, take your foot off the gas, steer into the skid, and regain control. If you have to stop right away, pump your brakes - don't slam on them. If your car has anti-lock braking systems (ABS), apply steady pressure to the brake pedal.



- **Prepare your car.** Keep your gas tank close to full to avoid gas line freeze-up. Replace windshield wiper blades. Clean the inside of your windows thoroughly. Apply a water-shedding material (such as Rain-X) to the outside of all windows, including the mirrors. Make sure your windshield washer system works and is full of an anti-icing fluid. Keep your tires properly inflated (check them before you drive) so that you never feel the flat spot of frozen tread as you start off in the morning. Check your lights. Use your headlights so that others will see you and, we hope, not pull out in front of you. Make sure your headlights and taillights are clear of snow. If you have an older car with sand-pitted headlights, get a new set of lenses.

- **Watch carefully for "black ice."** If the road looks slick, it probably is. This is especially true with one of winter's worst hazards: "black ice." Also called "glare ice," this is nearly transparent ice that often looks like a harmless puddle or is overlooked entirely. Test the traction with a smooth brake application or slight turn of the wheel.
- **Carry a winter survival kit,** especially on long trips or in isolated areas. Include matches and a candle, a parka and sleeping bag or emergency blanket, food, bottled water, first aid kit, jumper cables with safety goggles, gasoline antifreeze, fuel conditioner for diesel fuel, wrenches for minor repairs, a spare fan belt and radiator hose, spare spark plugs and spark plug wire.

**For more Winter Driving Safety Tips visit www.safetytoolboxtalks.com/Seasonal/10-winter-driving-tips.html





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Winter Sports Safety Tips

Winter recreational activities such as sledding, snowboarding, snowmobiling and many other snow sports provide fun for all of us. However, these activities come with a lot of risks for injuries. With just a few precautions and smart behavior, these activities should be safe and fun! Here are some quick winter sports tips to help ensure everyone is safe as you head outdoors.

Winter Sports and Activities

- Set reasonable time limits on outdoor play to prevent hypothermia and frostbite. Have children come inside periodically to warm up.

Sledding

- Children should be supervised while sledding.
- Sledding feet first or sitting up, instead of lying down head-first, may prevent head injuries.
- Consider having your child wear a helmet while sledding.
- Use steerable sleds, not snow disks or inner tubes.
- Sleds should be structurally sound and free of sharp edges and splinters, and the steering mechanism should be well lubricated.
- Sled slopes should be free of obstructions like trees or fences, should not be too steep, and end with a flat runoff.
- Avoid sledding in crowded areas.



Snow Skiing and Snowboarding

- You should be taught to ski or snowboard by a qualified instructor.
- Never ski or snowboard alone.
- Young children should always be supervised by an adult. Older children's need for adult supervision depends on their maturity and skill. If older children are not with an adult, they should always at least be accompanied by a friend.
- All skiers and snowboarders should wear helmets. Ski facilities should require helmet use, but if they do not, parents should enforce the requirement for their children.
- Equipment should fit. Skiers should wear safety bindings that are adjusted at least every year. Snowboarders should wear gloves with built-in wrist guards. Eye protection or goggles should also be used.
- Slopes should fit the ability and experience of the skier or snowboarder. Avoid crowded slopes.
- Avoid skiing in areas with trees and other obstacles.

Snowmobiling

- Children under age 16 should not operate snowmobiles and children under age 6 should never ride on snowmobiles.
- Do not use a snowmobile to pull a sled or skiers.
- Wear goggles and a safety helmet approved for use on motorized vehicles like motorcycles.
- Travel at safe speeds.
- Never snowmobile alone or at night.
- Stay on marked trails, away from roads, water, railroads and pedestrians.

**For more Winter Activity Safety Tips visit www.aap.org